

# PHILANDER CHASE

*in Ohio*

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PHILANDER CHASE

*First Bishop of Ohio, 1819-1831*

*First Bishop of Illinois, 1835-1852*

# Chase in Ohio

*by* RICHARD G. SALOMON

AT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH century the new Protestant Episcopal Church, now independent of the Church of England which had controlled its parishes in colonial times, had finished its organization in the area of the former thirteen colonies. Yet the Church still suffered under the well-nigh ruinous effects of the Revolutionary War. The parishes had paid a dear price for their association with the Church of the mother country, in material as well as personal losses. Large numbers of Loyalist clergy and communicants had migrated to Canada and the British West Indies; the separation of the Methodists had further reduced the Church's strength. In these circumstances it was the courageous vision of a few men like William White and Samuel Seabury that saved the Church. White's idea of a federated Church on a nation-wide basis had succeeded. The constitution of 1789 had created the frame; in many of the thirteen States the Church had achieved diocesan organization; episcopal succession had been secured, and the work of the Church as we know it had begun.

The effort at reorganization had been exhausting, and for two decades the Church appeared to be satis-



fied with this achievement. The sedate habits of the eighteenth-century mother Church of England began to characterize the life of the daughter Church. While lip-service was paid to the duty of preaching the Gospel to all people, in fact the Church took little notice of the possibilities and obligations that arose with the shift of population towards the West. There the huge territory between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi River had already attracted settlers from the East. Before the eighteenth century ended two new States, Kentucky and Tennessee, came into existence, and north of the Ohio River the areas of the Northwest Territory were well on their way to statehood.

The Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholics alike understood the missionary problem brought by the opening of the West. The Methodist circuit-rider and the Baptist farmer-preacher, the Presbyterian or Congregationalist clergyman, and the Roman missionary appeared with the first settlers along the expanding frontier. The Episcopalians, however, cultivated their organized parish life in the old places at home. They held their formal diocesan and General Conventions; they listened to dignified and learned sermons and paid little attention to the thousands of emigrants who left the seaboard States for the land of promise beyond the mountains, despite the fact that there were many of their own members among the settlers there. Few church people in the East took notice that here and there in the new country clusters of Episcopalians had built their cabins, little communities which were forced to fill their religious needs by the ministry of lay readers, since no clergyman ever

visited them. The generation that had succeeded so remarkably in rebuilding the organization of the Church after its disasters in the War was unable to rise to the new task of urgent missionary work.

Yet a century and a half later, the northern half of the country between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi was one of the strongholds of the Episcopal Church. In it there are thirteen dioceses in five States: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. It contains about one-eighth of the clergy and lay people of the entire Church, and it is marked by an energetic church life which asserts itself in every field, in well-attended services, in impressive church buildings and properties, in the life of theological schools, in social work. Here is a great change over the years, and one of the central figures in the story of that change is Philander Chase, a heroic missionary to whom the Church owes much.

#### THE PIONEER BISHOP WAS A PIONEER

CHASE's name is one of the few which, after a full century, are still alive in the memory of the Church. He was the first bishop in two of the former statewide dioceses, Ohio and Illinois, out of which later five dioceses were formed. He belongs to the second generation of American bishops, who between 1810 and 1820 overcame the apathy of the first years of the nineteenth century and brought new vigor into the life of the Episcopal Church. Three men in this generation made outstanding contributions to the Church's reawakening: Alexander Viets Griswold in New England, a man who knew the art of guiding men and organizations with gentleness and kindness; John Henry Hobart

of New York, a born ruler, organizer, and statesman, who knew how to make his commanding power felt; and Philander Chase in the midwest, a true pioneer, who knew how to conquer new territory for the Church. Chase's task differed sharply from that of his two contemporaries. They started with foundations laid by their predecessors and traditions which ran back into colonial times. They worked under conditions created by the comparatively old civilization of the East. Chase, on the other hand, broke virgin soil. When he came to the West he found little upon which he could build, and very little manpower to assist him. He had to clear the forest in order to sow, and this not only in a figurative sense. The pioneer bishop was a pioneer in the full sense of the word; during some periods of his episcopate he wielded the axe and threshed the grain as his farming ancestors had done.

#### A NEW ENGLAND PURITAN

PHILANDER CHASE, like other leaders in the Episcopal Church, came from a family outside its life. His forebears were New England farmers of Puritan stock. Born at Cornish, New Hampshire, in 1775, he spent a boyhood untouched by the critical events of the American Revolution, and received a good education. While he was studying for the ministry of the Congregational Church at Dartmouth College, Philander Chase was brought into the Episcopal Church, apparently through the discovery of *The Book of Common Prayer* and the influence of some visiting Episcopal clergymen. While it seems strange today, then it was not exceptional that the young convert was allowed to prepare for the ministry without having been confirmed.



In those days a regular course of theological study in a seminary was unknown. Candidates studied privately under the supervision of an experienced clergyman, much as the physician acquired his training as an apprentice to a practicing doctor. The academic requirements were not severe; what we would now call Chase's graduate study in theology amounted to little more than about a year and a half spent reading books from the library of the Rev. Thomas Ellison at Albany, New York, during those hours when he was free from his employment as a schoolteacher. Chase never made claims to deep theological scholarship; he had just so much learning as a missionary needed. Personal qualities were more important, and they had been developed in early youth when he had grown up as a typical farm boy in pioneer surroundings. There he acquired his love for rural life, his manly passion for struggling with the hardships of nature, his versatility in all kinds of manual work, and his courageous longing for adventure.

#### JEHOVAH JIREH

THE essential part of a missionary's equipment was all his own: an unshakable belief in God and in His Word. Philander Chase's faith was uncomplicated and Scriptural; its meaning was summed up in his favorite motto *Jehovah Jireh*—"God will provide"—which helped him through innumerable crises. He firmly believed that nothing was more important than to bring the Word of God to all men. The Church, with its divine commission and its established chain of authority, seemed to him the most effective instrument for this purpose. It is in this sense that in his early years he

was a High Churchman. His later life brought him into association with Evangelicalism; and in his last period, when Romanizing tendencies seemed to threaten the Church, he was militantly Protestant.

Shortly before his death Chase spoke with pride of his having been among the first professional missionaries of the Church. After his ordination to the diaconate in 1798 he entered at once upon missionary work. Bishop Provoost sent the young man into the sparsely settled regions of upper New York State, in preparation, as it were, for his greater enterprises in Ohio and Illinois. Proceeding from Albany westward as far as Canandaigua, where the world ended in the wilderness, he visited destitute little groups of settlers and Indians. He preached, he baptized; here and there he helped organize a parish, trusting that God would keep it alive once he had left. It was his first acquaintance with the wilderness, and from that time on its call remained insistent in his romantic soul. This first missionary travel ended when he accepted an invitation to become the rector of an organized parish at Poughkeepsie. But after six years, he could no longer resist the temptation to new adventures. An offer came to go to Louisiana as the first minister of the Church in New Orleans. There was enough of excitement: a long journey by sea, the loss of all his goods by shipwreck en route, yellow fever, perilous excursions into the bayous—not to mention personal difficulties in the congregation. Yet Chase later looked back to these years in the South with much satisfaction.

In 1811 he returned to a parish in Hartford, Connecticut, for another six years of settled life, the only really comfortable period he knew. His reasons for leaving at



the end of that time are complex. He certainly felt the call of missionary duty as he saw thousands of Connecticut people migrating westwards, but there were also personal reasons which influenced his decision to go. Consequently in March, 1817, after an arduous journey by coach and sleigh, Chase crossed into Ohio. He was entirely on his own. He was neither sent nor subsidized by any missionary society or authority in the Church. He simply set out alone to tackle the huge problem of bringing the services of the Church to the scattered settlements in Ohio.

#### RETURN TO WILDERNESS

CHASE was not the first missionary to enter the territory. In the southern part of Ohio Joseph Doddridge, a former Methodist minister who had taken holy orders in the Church, had already done a heroic work in twenty years of itinerant ministry. Living in western Virginia, he used to cross the river into Ohio, providing little groups of Episcopalians at Steubenville and other places with occasional services. His connection with the Diocese of Virginia was merely formal. Receiving no help, salary, or subsidy from the Church in the East, he actually made his living by practicing medicine. He was a humble, unambitious messenger of the Gospel, in some ways an ideal missionary. West of Doddridge's field of work, not far from the site of the present city of Columbus, a congregation of Episcopalians at Worthington enjoyed the unique privilege of having a clergyman in permanent residence. He was, however, in deacon's orders only, and not a man of Doddridge's humility. James Kilbourne—for that was his name—was a jack-of-all-trades, founder of the

village, surveyor, explorer, merchant, hotel owner, commander of the militia, politician, and sometime member of Congress. The ministry was simply a sideline among Kilbourne's activities, to be exercised when time permitted. Thus even in Worthington the congregation often had to be satisfied with the services of lay readers only.

Just a month before Chase came, a third man arrived in Ohio, also a Connecticut clergyman who was willing to sacrifice his rectorship there to the higher duty of missionary enterprise: Roger Searle. In one sense Chase and Searle were rivals at the moment of their coming. Both had ideas about organizing the Church in Ohio. While the plan of creating a diocese there had already been suggested by Doddridge and Kilbourne, the small number of clergy and communicants made it premature. But Searle succeeded in persuading the General Convention of 1817 to change the existing rules and allow the organization of a diocese on a small foundation.

A year elapsed before the election of a bishop became possible, and during this period (1817-18) Chase and Searle worked side by side, but each in his own way, with little real co-operation. They toured Ohio incessantly, founding dozens of parishes where there were stray groups of Episcopalians. To a large extent this meant casting bread upon the waters; many of these early parishes were not strong enough to survive. Founding a parish was very simple. Its basis might be no more than good intentions, hope and optimism; there was little careful calculation of possibilities. The missionary, arriving at a place where some people showed an interest in the Church, would call a

meeting. A very brief statement was drawn up, including association under a chosen parish name, and the adoption of the constitution of the Episcopal Church. This was signed by all the men present. Wardens and vestrymen were then elected. This was all; the rest was good resolutions. To find a resident minister and to build the church were tasks left for the future. The most the missionary could do was to return to the place once in a while; meantime a lay reader acted for him—if there was any member of the new parish willing and able to undertake this responsibility. But in many instances the noble impulse of the moment vanished with the departure of the missionary, and the Act of Association remained the first and last trace of parish life.

Experienced missionaries had no illusions about these possibilities. They had to adopt the method of trial and error. Considering their work a process of sowing, they were well aware that a good deal of their seed would not take root. Yet there are some great and flourishing parishes in Ohio today, Christ Church, Cincinnati, for example, which owe their existence to Philander Chase's initial visit to the town.

Guided by his practical sense, Chase sought a strategic point for his work, and found it at Worthington. There he bought a farm to provide subsistence for himself and his family. With no prospect of any salary or financial help from outside, how he made ends meet remains more or less of a riddle. Chase had a peculiar relation to money: for his missionary work he could never get enough to satisfy him; for himself he wanted nothing, and never hesitated to expose himself and his family to any hardship in order to finance his



work. Consequently, he learned to live from hand to mouth. A combination of farm work—in better times with hired help; in worse, with his own hands—and teaching saw him through somehow. Moreover, he had no qualms about accepting help, hospitality, or benevolence as a due reward for his labors.

Three months after his arrival in Ohio his family had joined him on the farm, and he had accepted the rectorship of Worthington and the four adjacent parishes. It was in this year that he wrote:

I am happy because I have so much to do and so many things in anticipation. This is all a man has to make him happy. After he has stretched his thoughts and capacities *as far as he can* into the future, he must then stretch them *a little further*.

#### BISHOP OF OHIO

HERE is a characteristic statement, the key to Chase's whole life. It formulates his professional secret: the combination of vision and will, the deep-rooted optimism with which he always overcame failures and disappointments. It also explains why, when in May, 1818, five clergymen and eight laymen met in diocesan convention at Worthington, Chase was elected bishop. Only one vote, Chase's own, was given for the senior priest in the group, Doddridge. Chase's stormy and strong personality triumphed over the quieter virtues of the older man.

Now he had "much to do" indeed. The duty of controlling the new diocese kept him in the saddle a good part of every year, on broken trails and miserable paths through the wide stretches of unsettled land. Accidents, with more or less serious consequences, became familiar. The stumbling of his horse, the over-

turned carriage, the broken rib—all appear countless times in his reports, but such “catastrophies,” as he called them, did not interfere with his restless activities. His powerful body, the “elephantine form” a brother bishop called it, became conditioned to injuries, it seems. His travel equipment on these journeys was simple, its most important part being a saddlebag full of Prayer Books, carried along to make a service possible anywhere. There were still no Episcopal church buildings in Ohio. Occasionally the Presbyterian or Methodist ministers would offer the use of their own new churches, but more typical is the situation described thus in Chase’s own words:

The roads being bad and the country new, we were somewhat delayed. The congregation had been assembled some time and anxiously awaiting our arrival. At sight of us they were greatly rejoiced; and being too numerous to be all accommodated with seats in the log cabins, they removed to a convenient place in the adjoining wood. Here, with a small table taken from the cabin and covered with a coarse white cloth on which to lay the holy books, the trees and the sky for our canopy and an assembly of people from the neighboring woods for our audience, the Doctor [Doddridge] and I performed the solemn services of the Church and baptized a number of children.

Actually the new area was a diocese only in so far as it was supposed to be self-sustaining. The bishop did not receive, nor did he expect, a salary. As Chase put it himself, he wanted to

... imitate the first preachers of Christianity, the Apostles; if they had waited till salaries had been prepared for their maintenance, no Gospel would have been spread out through the world.

His diocesan clergy, no more than six during the first years, struggled along as best they could on small

stipends. The financial situation of the Church in Ohio was that of a missionary district, and a very poor one at that. Yet like the bishop, the clergy tried to be available everywhere, ignoring the distances and the poor roads. Chase did his best to increase their numbers, addressing the East in touching appeals to send him men, young men willing to work with missionary zeal and to find their only reward in gathering souls. But the sole response was from the bishop's own nephew, Intrepid Morse, who became his most active assistant and most loyal and trusted vassal for the rest of his life.

#### A HUMBLE SCHOOL

PHILANDER CHASE was not easily convinced that it was not ill will that withheld the necessary manpower. He knew that his brethren in the East regarded him as an irregular freelance with little respect for established methods and traditions. He dramatically stressed his own sufferings and those of the "sinking Church in the West"—a peculiarly inappropriate term for something that was just in its beginnings and forgot or ignored that the Eastern dioceses suffered under the same clergy shortage that Ohio felt. Characteristically, after four years of disappointment he decided to see what he could do himself. If the East would or could not give him men, he would found a "humble school" for candidates for the ministry and educate his own clergy. This far-reaching resolution led him into new fields of action, adding to his successes, but simultaneously becoming a source of endless conflict and even personal tragedy.

Church and school were more closely connected in that period than today. Chase was not the only pioneer



Churchman who felt the need for founding schools. Almost every Church did the same, and in the Episcopal Church some of his brother bishops in Kentucky and Missouri followed Chase's example a few years later, with less final success. Understanding that the means to finance such an enterprise could not be expected from the East, Chase turned to a more promising source, the mother Church in England. When he communicated his plan to the members of the House of Bishops he was met with every kind of criticism, from raised eyebrows and personal suspicions to unveiled threats of active opposition to what some felt was an undignified beggary that would discredit the American Church. But nobody could ever make Chase give up a decision once taken. He resented criticism, he felt hurt, he indulged in self-pity for being misunderstood, misjudged, mistreated; but he always continued with his plans.

#### CHASE CHARMS ENGLAND

THE story of Chase's campaign in England is a truly fascinating chapter in his life. He arrived unknown, equipped with little more than an introductory letter from Henry Clay to Lord Gambier. He found that another American bishop had arrived two weeks ahead of him, circularizing the English church people with a warning against an unauthorized appeal for help from "a particular diocese" in America. Chase was undaunted. Lord Gambier at first received him coolly, but the bishop's irresistible eloquence softened him, and he provided Chase with further introductions among his Evangelical friends. Chase's personality, his open and sincere dedication to the cause, and the aureole

surrounding this Christian messenger from the distant wilderness, won him friends, not only among the Evangelicals but also among the High Churchmen. In Lord Kenyon, Chase found his most generous benefactor. With an astonishing ease the farmer-pioneer bishop moved in the circles of English aristocracy, of clergy high and low, of the wealthy middle class, utilizing his contacts with a combination of becoming dignity and congenital Yankee shrewdness. An observer in later years testified that Chase was "exceedingly agreeable, polished and finished in his manner," as long as he was not "ruffled with opposition or displeasure." In this society there was no opposition; with "his countenance most noble and strikingly expressive" he charmed old and young alike, men and women equally. His later correspondence with friends acquired on this journey is characterized by a tone of lasting admiration and even, at times, adulation. One young lady who saw the bishop only once for a half hour established a personal "Chase-cult." The volume of his autograph letters which she collected is still in existence. Another girl adopted a new middle name in his honor—Ohio—calling herself Mary Ohio. It is no wonder that his sanguine optimism mounted. A chance acquaintance with one of the royal chaplains was entered into Chase's diary in enthusiastic capital letters: "Chaplain to the KING," betraying his hope that George IV might be persuaded to do something for Christian education in distant Ohio—a strange misjudgment of that royal personage.

After the better part of a year spent touring England in this fashion, speaking (and it might be noted that English law at this time did not allow an American

bishop to take services or preach in English churches), writing, and distributing appeals, Chase returned to Ohio with "the needful"—about thirty thousand dollars, collected from English benefactors, a very considerable sum for those days. The money was to be spent to establish the humble school for clergy in Ohio, and the way in which Chase's plan was carried out reveals both his weaknesses and his strength.

To educate clergy locally was theoretically a good idea, but where were the candidates for such education to be found? Ohio had few schools that could produce men fit to undertake graduate studies. So the humble school, to which Chase now gave the prouder title of *The Theological Seminary of the Diocese of Ohio*, had to be provided with a preparatory division; both a grammar school and a college. It so happened that almost immediately the college department became more important to the founder than the original humble school, and more interesting to the bishop's restless mind than the affairs of his diocese. While he did not neglect his duties of visitation and supervision, his clergy and leading laymen felt, with some justice, that the better part of Bishop Chase's thoughts went into the college project.

#### KENYON COLLEGE ON GAMBIER HILL

HE chose the place for his school, insisting that it should be far from any city, a "retreat of virtue in seclusion from the vices of the world," a rural domain, self-sustaining with fields and flocks, an oasis in the wilderness. Here he would rule as his beloved heroes of the Old Testament, the patriarchs, ruled their families and clans. All his experience in travel, his knowl-



edge of the cities of the East and of England, had only strengthened his old love of farm life and his romantic passion for the wilderness scene.

In the center of Ohio, on what he gratefully called Gambier Hill, Chase built his lasting monument, the first hall of Kenyon College, now known as Old Kenyon. Destroyed by fire in recent years, the hall has been reconstructed in its original form, a decision motivated partly by the fact that it was the first attempt at building in the so-called American collegiate gothic style, but more so by the consideration that the building was the personal creation of the founder of the college. In the years of its erection, 1826-1829, Chase was everything on Gambier Hill: architect, construction superintendent, water engineer, farm manager, and fund-raiser. And in the latter capacity he resorted to peculiar schemes, some of which were amusingly clever. Chase was quick to secure his own appointment as Postmaster of Gambier, for while postage was forbiddingly high in those days, mail addressed to postmasters was carried postage free. When Chase's appeals for support of Kenyon College, the "Rose in the Wilderness" or the "Star in the West," went out, people were asked to "send one dollar to P. Chase, *Postmaster*, Gambier." He knew what he was doing; people would more easily be persuaded to send a dollar if they did not have to spend half a dollar for postage! In the circulars by which he hoped to attract settlers to his new community the bishop appeared in another guise: "P. Chase, *Agent*." He knew that in business affairs people would more easily approach an agent than a bishop.

But even when both college and farm life began to develop in the wilderness, Chase was not satisfied.

Years of hard work had brought out some of the sharp edges of his character, his domineering manners. His nerves often gave way, and men found it difficult to work under him. "There was nothing which he deprecated more than discussion," wrote one who had been closely associated with the bishop; "no greater offense could be offered him than thinking him in error." The truth is that Chase was the victim of his many abilities; he could not believe that anyone else could do anything quite as well as he could. He trusted in God, not in men, but unhappily his trust in God often saw the will of God represented in his own will. He knew how to put people to work, but his authoritarian, he called it "patriarchal," manner alienated them. He was unstable in his moods. Optimistic elation, caused by a small success, would be suddenly replaced by melancholy dejection, the consequence of some small failure. Then there would be a note of repentance and humiliation in his letters and writings. But true humility was not among Chase's virtues, or at least it is not evident in his dealings with his fellows.

All this led to the inevitable crisis. In 1831 the bishop was faced by a solid front of resistance to his régime in college and in diocese. Deeply hurt by what he interpreted as the spirit of rebellion in a lawless age, he resigned both the presidency of the college and the bishopric, leaving the hill forever. It was a hasty and rash action, in terms of canon law not even legal, but the Diocesan Convention of Ohio accepted his resignation and all attempts to heal the breach were in vain. Chase, nursing his wrongs—"murdered," he said, by a dark conspiracy—retired further into the wilderness, pouring out his grief and indignation in a pam-

phlet campaign against his opponents. In wild imagery and with a florid style he invoked God's help against the "ingrates" and "vipers" who had injured him. "Like the dying eagle," he wrote, "I am bereaved of my ability to redress my wrongs by arrows in the hands of my enemies winged with my own gulls." Chase never forgot these trying days. All his life he waited vainly for an act of "repentance" from those whom he fancied his enemies.

It is not easy to discern right and wrong in this controversy. Chase, honest in his intentions but never able to understand the point of view of others, overlooked the part that his own actions had in bringing on the crisis. On the other hand, the faculty of Kenyon, the clergy, and the Ohio laymen showed little forbearance towards him or gratitude to the man who had built the house in which they lived. Chase's work in Ohio, though not spectacular, was nonetheless enduring. When he left the number of clergy had increased from five to seventeen, churches had been built in many places, and the foundations of the future had been well and truly laid.

#### FURTHER WEST . . . ANOTHER COLLEGE

PHILANDER CHASE was not the man to sulk long. His restless urge to carry on his work combined with the material needs of his family to lead him to new fields, still farther West. In Michigan, near the Indiana border, at the very edge of an unopened wilderness, he settled on a new farm. Giving most of his time to agricultural work, he offered his ministrations on Sundays to his neighbors in a wide circle around the area, a self-appointed missionary as Doddridge had been in Ohio.



The old dreams did not vanish easily. He was still haunted by the desire to establish "a self-supporting school to train ministers," and in 1835 he began to take steps to build another school in Michigan. Yet at the very outset he was interrupted in this project by an unexpected call.

The Episcopalians in Illinois had constituted a new diocese, and offered Chase the bishopric. He was then about sixty years old, an advanced age according to the standards of the time, but he accepted without hesitation, although no salary was attached to the position. Chase was stirred by the prospect of doing perhaps an even greater work and with more satisfactory results than in Ohio. For a while at least, the revenues of his farm would see him through; after that "Jehovah Jireh." The bishop knew nothing of Illinois, not even how to spell its name in his first letters about his new diocese, but, as he wrote to a friend, "God hath a greater work for me to do than to remain in Ohio." He continued, "Let others repose in the beds that, under God, I have made. I had rather be up and doing and marching forward in the path of painful duty till the very Mississippi, the father of the rivers, stops my course."

An inspection trip revealed the pitiful weakness of the Episcopal Church in Illinois: six clergy and no more than two hundred members in the whole of the state, as against the thousands of Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians; and as against the energetic missionary endeavors of the Church which Chase abhorred: the Church of Rome. But Illinois in the 1830's looked very familiar to Chase. It was very like Ohio twenty years before. He described the new field of work:

Many extended prairies, intersected by streams without bridges and sloughs as if without bottom; the country thinly inhabited, cabins few and far between; villages just filling up with inhabitants exhausted of their means by removing to the Far West and struggling for a bare subsistence.

Chase's work in the following years was very much of a repetition of his beginnings in Ohio. The main problem was the same: manpower. His solution was the same: education. As the convention which had elected him showed a desire to establish a school, Chase again went to England to raise money for another "school of the prophets" in the American wilderness. The material result, however, was much less impressive than that of his first journey. But at least it enabled the bishop to make a start, and at a location not far from Peoria, Illinois, he began work on his new school, Jubilee College. Anxious to avoid troubles of the character that had bred difficulty at Kenyon, Chase organized Jubilee College from the beginning exclusively under his control. For a while it gave hope of prospering; then gradually it withered away, beset by catastrophes. Today the college building still stands, the melancholy monument to a failure of good intentions and high hopes. The college grounds are now a State Park, and restoration work on the building is under way. In August, 1954, the chapel was solemnly re-dedicated. So the State of Illinois has paid homage to the memory of one of its great pioneers.

In diocesan work Philander Chase achieved more in his second episcopate than in his first, although the progress was painfully slow to his impatient mind. The population of Illinois was unstable amid the westward movements of thousands of people, Episcopalians

were small in numbers, and the clergy lived in dire poverty. All around him Chase saw thousands flocking to the Mormon standard of Joseph Smith, the "new Mohammed," as the bishop called him. Occasionally he spoke with unveiled bitterness about the

. . . paralysis of the Church in almost entirely neglecting the missionary cause. Other denominations build, but our Church, wealthy as are her members, must see her children worship in court houses and log cabins. *Be it so.* We are assured we shall at last all lie together in a cold grave. God grant it may be in sure and certain hope of the resurrection.

But nothing daunted Chase. He labored on, and when he died in 1852, the clergy of the diocese were thirty men strong, five times the number he found when he came. The cost of slow but steady advance was paid by Philander Chase in constant travel, continuous hardship, and the selfless outpouring of his energy.

#### AND PRESIDING BISHOP

FOR the last ten years of his life Chase was the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, an office that was then held by the senior bishop in point of consecration. Chase was too much of a controversial figure to have achieved this eminence by the election of his brother bishops. Yet the results of his life work commanded respect on all sides. His friends and admirers were mounting in numbers as the years passed. After his death, his successor spoke in a memorial address of Chase's strong will, self-reliant sagacity, and rough grandeur, yet he could not refrain from remarking that his authority was "perhaps impatiently borne" by those under him. Few, indeed, were easy under Chase's



patriarchal authoritarianism. There was only one human being who shared his belief in his own infallibility: his second wife, Sophia Chase, the most devoted and efficient helpmate a missionary ever had. She adored him, stood by him in every adversity, never complaining, ever willing to do as he commanded. And he returned her devotion; she was the only person whose advice he ever asked, and, occasionally, took.

Philander Chase died at the age of seventy-seven, and was buried under the beautiful trees on the grounds of Jubilee College. An intimate memorial of him is at Brimfield: Zion Church, built and consecrated by Bishop Chase in 1845, and recently restored in his memory.

Chase lived and worked in the days of small things. In spite of all his rash mistakes and restless shortcomings, he has a lasting place among the great missionaries of the Church. Through the pages of his *Reminiscences* one still finds the man of God, struggling with the problems of a pioneer age, heroic in his devotion and labor, and building soundly for the generations that follow.

## For Further Reading

*Philander Chase* by Laura Chase Smith (New York, 1905).

*Reminiscences* by Philander Chase (Second Edition, Boston, 1848).

*The Episcopal Church in the United States 1789-1931* by James Thayer Addison (New York, Scribners, 1951).

# Prayers

## *For Missions*

**A**LMIGHTY God, whose compassions fail not, and whose loving kindness reacheth unto the world's end; We give thee humble thanks for opening heathen lands to the light of thy truth; for making paths in the deep waters and highways in the desert; and for planting thy Church in all the earth. Grant, we beseech thee, unto us thy servants, that with lively faith we may labour abundantly to make known to all men thy blessed gift of eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## *For Domestic Missions*

**A**LMIGHTY God by whose heavenly inspiration we think those things that are right, even as by thy merciful guidance we perform the same; quicken in the hearts of thy servants, the bishops and other pastors of thy flock, and the people committed to their charge, such a sense of their duty to all who are ignorant, erring and uncared-for in this land as shall move them to sacrifice and service in their behalf, without stint and without delay. Make us to see that souls are perishing for lack of the knowledge of Jesus Christ and him crucified, and since thou hast entrusted to us the knowledge of thy truth and gifts of thy bounty, help us to use them as good stewards, that so thy Word may be proclaimed and thy kingdom enlarged, to the glory of thy Name and the salvation of men; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## *For Vocation*

**A**LMIGHTY God, who didst enkindle the flame of thy love in the heart of thy servant Philander Chase; grant unto us thy humble servants, the same faith, courage, and devotion to duty; that, as we remember his work, we may lay our hearts open to thy call; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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